TRAVELING TO THE CARIBBEAN?

The Caribbean's biodiversity is unmatched. As a traveler, you can make choices to help end the illegal wildlife trafficking that threatens the variety of life in this stunning region.

A coalition of corporate, NGO, and public-sector partners are working together to protect Caribbean wildlife and preserve the region.

U.S. Wildlife Trafficking Alliance
BE INFORMED. BUY INFORMED

www.USWTA.org

U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

www.fws.gov

WWF

www.wwf.org

TRAFFIC
the wildlife trade monitoring network

www.traffic.org

KNOW BEFORE YOU GO

When you travel in the Caribbean, you'll find wildlife and plant products for sale—as jewelry, clothes, pets, souvenirs, and more. But just because you can buy something doesn't mean you can legally take it home. Exporting or importing products made from protected animals or plants may be illegal. Other wildlife products may require permits before you can bring them into the United States. By making informed choices, you can support wildlife conservation around the world—and avoid having your souvenir confiscated or paying a fine.

A region of remarkable beauty, the Caribbean is home to six of the world's seven sea turtle species and 14 percent of the world's coral reefs. Nearly one-third of the plants and animals in the Caribbean islands are found nowhere else in the world. Consequently, many Caribbean countries protect their native wildlife under both national laws and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). Signed by more than 183 nations, this treaty supports sustainable trade in wildlife and plants while protecting endangered species.

Please support the conservation efforts of Caribbean nations: Learn the facts and ask questions before you buy any wildlife or plant product.

ASK BEFORE YOU BUY

Is your purchase legal and properly sourced?
Ask the seller:

- ✔ What is this product made of?
- ✔ Where did this product come from?
- ✔ Does this country allow the sale and export of this product?
- ✔ Do I need permits or other documents from this country or the United States to bring this item home?

Questions about a purchase?
Contact local natural resource agencies or the country's CITES Management Authority, or check:

www.FWS.gov

www.FWS.gov/international/permits

www.CITES.org

REMEMBER: WHEN IN DOUBT, DON'T BUY!

Be Informed. Buy Informed.

CARIBBEAN TRAVELER'S GUIDE

BUYER BEWARE LIST

AVOID

These items are generally prohibited from being brought into the United States.

- ✗ All sea turtle products
- ✗ Live monkeys or apes
- ✗ Most live birds, including parrots, macaws, cockatoos, and finches
- ✗ Wild bird feathers and mounted birds
- ✗ Products made from spotted cats, such as jaguars and ocelots

ASK

These items may be prohibited from being brought into the United States.

- ! Some live snakes, turtles, crocodilians, and lizards
- ! Certain leather products, including some made from caiman, crocodiles, lizards, and snakes
- ! Some corals, coral products, and shells
- ! Certain plants—particularly orchids, cacti, and cycads
- ! Some varieties of caviar
- ! Mounted butterflies, moths, and other insects

BUY INFORMED

YOUR GUIDE TO SHOPPING IN THE CARIBBEAN

Before you buy souvenirs in the Caribbean, make sure that the country you're visiting allows the export of its native species or other wildlife. Remember: resource protection laws and treaties cover not only live animals and plants but also mounted specimens, foods, and parts and products made from or decorated with fur, hide, skins, feathers, scales, shell, antlers, horns, teeth, claws, or bones.

Many protected wildlife products may not be legally imported into the United States and you should avoid purchasing such items. These guidelines apply to wildlife items that you carry with you or bring back in your checked luggage for your personal use, all of which must be declared to wildlife inspectors or customs officers. Stricter prohibitions may apply if you mail or ship your purchases home.

CORAL

Many Caribbean countries have laws that protect coral reefs. Many nations limit the collection, sale, and export of live coral and coral products. Consult local authorities before buying coral souvenirs, jewelry, or aquarium decorations—these items may require permits or be banned from export.

SHELLS

Check country laws before beachcombing or collecting shells. Certain countries limit the collection, sale and export of shells and shell products. Import restrictions may also apply.

PARROT (PSITTACINE) PRODUCTS: Items containing wild parrot feathers are generally prohibited from import into the U.S.

JAGUAR PRODUCTS: Avoid buying jewelry made from jaguar teeth and claws.

SEA TURTLES

International trade in all sea turtle products is prohibited, and most Caribbean countries ban domestic sale, but poaching and commercial use remain serious threats. Avoid jewelry and sea turtle products made from "tortoiseshell"; sea turtle meat, soup, eggs, facial creams, and shells; and leathers, boots, handbags, and other goods made from sea turtle skin. You may not import these items into the United States.

CONCH

Populations of queen conch in most areas of the Caribbean have declined due to intensive fishing for their meat and collection for their rare pearls and their shells, which are sold whole or made into carvings or jewelry. Many countries regulate collection and export of queen conch meat, shells, and products. Always check country laws. International treaty restricts import to three shells in personal baggage.

BIRDS

In most cases, you cannot buy a wild bird (such as a parrot, macaw, cockatoo, or finch) in another country and bring it home with you. The United States prohibits the importation of the feathers and parts of most wild birds without a permit. This ban also includes mounted birds and bird nests.

CAVIAR

If you are on a cruise or visit a duty-free shop, you may have an opportunity to buy caviar. All sturgeon species are protected, and trade in sturgeon meat and caviar is regulated worldwide. Without a permit, you may import only up to 125 grams (about 4 ounces) of sturgeon caviar per person per trip, and some types are prohibited from import altogether.

REPTILES

Many leather manufacturers work with skins from sustainably harvested reptiles, such as the American alligator. But some snake, turtle, tortoise, crocodilian, and lizard species are protected; their import as pets or in leather products may be subject to trade restrictions. Check before buying reptiles or reptile products overseas or before taking these items with you when you travel outside the United States.

PLANTS

Plants, such as orchids, cacti, and cycads, may be subject to national and international conservation laws as well as strict pest regulations. Many countries inspect imported plants and require documents certifying that they are pest- and disease-free. Before you collect seeds or buy live plants to bring home, remember that species introduced into new places can become invasive, crowding out and endangering native plants. The importation of plants is additionally regulated by the Department of Agriculture.

INSECTS

You can find mounted butterflies, moths, and other insects for sale in the Caribbean, and you may need permits to bring these items home. Check U.S. Department of Agriculture restrictions for more information.

OTHER SPECIES

Other wildlife and wildlife products can also be found for sale in the Caribbean. Among these are live monkeys, which are almost universally protected from trade, and products made from spotted cats, such as jaguars and ocelots, whose skins are prohibited in trade.

SEA TURTLE PRODUCTS: Jewelry and other items made from sea turtle shell are prohibited from import into the U.S.

All photos courtesy of Sarah Metzer/USFWS